



DIGGING DEEPER

Psalm 123 – Patience under pressure

PLEASE READ – Psalm 123

GETTING STARTED

Although this seems at first to be about a very different kind of world – masters, mistresses, and servants – we find some very profound connections with typical modern life, too: contempt, scorn, pride. If (when?) we encounter such things, what answers do we have?

“Enthroned in heaven” (1)

- How do we try to find the right balance between reverence for and intimacy with God?
- By the time we get as far as “worship wars” – sometimes quite profound disagreements over the precise details of *how* we worship God – haven't we already lost, no matter which faction has its way?

“Master”, “mistress” and “slave” (2)

- If such language seems to speak of bygone ages or backward civilisations based upon the questionable ideas of an elitist “aristocracy”, is it appropriate in the Bible?
- So are we to see ourselves (nowadays) as servants (or *slaves??*) of God?
- And is it appropriate that we wait timidly for the scraps of mercy from God's table?

“Contempt”, “ridicule” (3-4)

- Have you ever suffered scorn or contempt (not necessarily for being a believer)? How did you feel? How did you react?
- How might we sometimes draw unnecessary scorn upon ourselves? Surely all scorn can't be identical with “the offence of the Cross”?
- But when we do suffer this undeservingly, despite all our best and holiest efforts, what should our response be? Check out 1 Peter 2:18-23.
- How does “looking to Jesus” actually help, though?
- Hold on ... let's drop the jargon: what do we actually *mean*, in practice, by “looking to Jesus”?